



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/759,531	01/20/2004	Kenneth M. Welborn	6292.211	7097

7590 03/22/2005

Joseph W. Berenato, III  
Liniak, Berenato & White, LLC  
Suite 240  
6550 Rock Spring Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20817

EXAMINER

DESAI, HEMANT

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3721

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/759,531

**Applicant(s)**

WELBORN ET AL.

**Examiner**

Hemant M Desai

**Art Unit**

3721

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 January 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-23 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 23 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>1/20/2004</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

**DETAILED ACTION**

***Election/Restrictions***

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C.

121:

- I. Claims 1-22, drawn to a packaging apparatus, classified in class 53, subclass 235.
- II. Claim 23, drawn to a method of packaging a product, classified in class 53, subclass 475.

The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

2. Inventions II and I are related as process and apparatus for its practice.

The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the apparatus as claimed can be practiced by another materially different process such as placing a product to be packaged on the product support surface in the first position, receiving a box having a closed bottom and an open top on the second platform, the closed bottom adjacent the platform, securing the box to the second platform, aligning the open top with the first platform in the first position by pivoting the second platform to the second position, providing a first lift aligned with and extending between the first platform in the first position and the second platform in the second position, providing a second lift aligned with and extending between the first platform in the second position and a discharge roller, moving

Art Unit: 3721

the first lift from the second platform in the second position towards the first platform in the first position until the product passes through the open top of the box, aligning the closed bottom of the box with discharge roller by pivoting the first platform to the second position, moving the second lift from toward the discharge roller until the closed bottom contacts the discharge roller, and releasing the box onto the discharge roller.

3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

4. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

5. During a telephone conversation with Joseph Berenato on 3/8/2005 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claim 1-22. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claim 23 is withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

6. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

7. Claims 8-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Art Unit: 3721

Several phrase in the claim are vague, misleading and/or indefinite, for example, "a second position....direction" (claim 8, lines 8-9) it is not clear when the platform is pivoting in second position how can the product contact surface be in a second direction, "a lowerator", it is not clear what exactly applicant is referring to because there is no specific meaning of the term "lowerator" and there is no mention of "lowerator" in the specification either. If applicant intends to claim "lowerator assembly", pages 24-25, than applicant must positively recite the structure of the "lowerator assembly".

### ***Double Patenting***

8. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Art Unit: 3721

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

9. Claims 1-7 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-5, 13-14 of U.S. Patent No. 6679033 in view of Fuller et al. (3475877).

Claim 1 of Patent No. 6679033 discloses all the limitations of claim 1 of present application except for a platform being pivotable between a first angular orientation and second angular orientation. However, Fuller et al. teaches a platform (233, fig. 1) being pivotable between a first angular orientation (in phantom line, fig. 1) and second angular orientation (in solid line, fig. 1) to change the orientation of filled box from upside down position to facing up position (see col. 17, lines 4-9). Therefore it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to having provided the platform being pivotable between a first angular orientation and second angular orientation as taught by Fuller et al. in the claim 1 of U.S. Patent 6679033 to change the orientation of filled box from upside down position to facing up position.

Claims 2-5, 13 and 14 of Patent No. 6679033 are identical to claims 2-7 of present application.

10. Claims 1-7 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Hart et al. (6679033) in view of Fuller et al. (3475877).

Art Unit: 3721

The applied reference has a common assignee with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art only under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) might be overcome by: (1) a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not an invention "by another"; (2) a showing of a date of invention for the claimed subject matter of the application which corresponds to subject matter disclosed but not claimed in the reference, prior to the effective U.S. filing date of the reference under 37 CFR 1.131; or (3) an oath or declaration under 37 CFR 1.130 stating that the application and reference are currently owned by the same party and that the inventor named in the application is the prior inventor under 35 U.S.C. 104, together with a terminal disclaimer in accordance with 37 CFR 1.321(c). For applications filed on or after November 29, 1999, this rejection might also be overcome by showing that the subject matter of the reference and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person. See MPEP § 706.02(I)(1) and § 706.02(I)(2).

Hart et al. discloses all the limitations of present application except for a platform being pivotable between a first angular orientation and second angular orientation. However, Fuller et al. teaches a platform (233, fig. 1) being pivotable between a first angular orientation (in phantom line, fig. 1) and second angular orientation (in solid line, fig. 1) to change the orientation of filled box from upside down position to facing up position (see col. 17, lines 4-9). Therefore it would

Art Unit: 3721

have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to having provided the platform being pivotable between a first angular orientation and second angular orientation as taught by Fuller et al. in the claim 1 of U.S. Patent 6679033 to change the orientation of filled box from upside down position to facing up position.

***Allowable Subject Matter***

11. Claim 8 would be allowable if rewritten or amended to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action.

12. Claims 9-22 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hemant M Desai whose telephone number is (571) 272-4458. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:00 AM-5: 30 PM, Mon-Thurs..

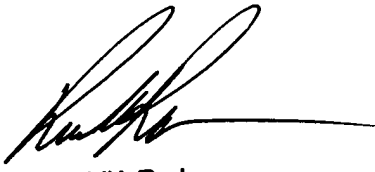
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Rinaldi I. Rada can be reached on (571) 272-4467. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.



Art Unit: 3721

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

HMD



Rinaidi I. Rada  
Supervisory Patent Examiner  
Group 3700